

Senate Resolution 401

By: Senator Unterman of the 45th

## A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing May, 2019, as Lyme Disease Awareness Month at the state capitol; and for  
2 other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the health and well-being of the citizens of the State of Georgia are of  
4 paramount importance; and

5 WHEREAS, Lyme disease is a common but frequently misunderstood illness that, if not  
6 caught early and treated properly, can cause serious health problems; and

7 WHEREAS, Lyme disease is a serious infection caused by the spread of spirochetal bacteria,  
8 or *Borrelia burgdorferi*, and transmitted through the bite of infected blacklegged ticks.  
9 Scientists have identified more strains and species of *Borrelia burgdorferi* in the  
10 Southeastern states than in any other region of the country, and therefore the risk of acquiring  
11 Lyme disease in the Southeast may be elevated; and

12 WHEREAS, ticks are carried by birds and other animals, and are frequently encountered by  
13 Georgia citizens in many parts of the state. Ticks are small and difficult to detect, thus many  
14 of those who contract tick-borne diseases do not recall being bitten. As a result, Lyme  
15 disease and other tick-borne illnesses are underreported nationwide; and

16 WHEREAS, improper removal of embedded ticks is dangerous and can increase the risk of  
17 acquiring an infection. Early diagnosis is necessary, as prompt treatment with adequate  
18 antibiotic therapy in early stage may cure Lyme and other tick-borne diseases, and prevent  
19 permanent damage or future complications. Lyme disease may become more challenging to  
20 treat if therapy is delayed, and untreated or inadequately treated tick-borne diseases may lead  
21 to death; and

22 WHEREAS, the causes, symptoms, and treatment of Lyme disease is not entirely known, and  
23 continued research is needed to better understand and assist those with infection. With more

24 than a dozen tick-borne diseases now recognized in the Southeastern United States, citizens  
25 and medical providers must be prepared to address symptoms resulting from tick bites to  
26 prevent unnecessary illness; and

27 WHEREAS, Lyme Disease Awareness Month provides an opportunity to focus on this  
28 significant and complex disease, to provide information on and raise public awareness of its  
29 causes, effects and treatments, and to underscore important education and research efforts  
30 surrounding Lyme and tick-borne diseases.

31 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body  
32 recognize May, 2019, as Lyme Disease Awareness Month at the state capitol.

33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed  
34 to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the public and the  
35 press.